



FIGHTING for PENNSYLVANIA FAMILIES

S.2550 The RISE Act

U.S. Senator Bob Casey

Students with disabilities are graduating high school and enrolling in college at an all-time high. It is critically important to our nation's economic health and prosperity that every student can access postsecondary education. Yet, students with disabilities often face barriers in college that prevent them from truly excelling. The Respond, Innovate, Succeed, and Empower Act of 2021 (RISE) Act addresses three significant challenges confronting students with disabilities and their families as they prepare for postsecondary education.

Challenge: **Students with a documented disability may have to undergo new, costly diagnostic testing once in higher education to demonstrate they qualify for disability services in college.** Currently, the majority of schools require testing be 'recent' (within as little as six months), despite diagnosis of a lifelong disability or an existing IEP from the student's high school.

Solution: The RISE Act clarifies that a past individualized education program (IEP), 504 plan, or documentation from the armed services, as well as other types of documentation commonly held by students with disabilities, will be sufficient to establish a student's disability in college.

Challenge: **Finding information about disability services programs offered at institutions of higher education (IHEs) can be challenging for students with disabilities, and their families.**

Solution: The RISE Act requires schools to adopt transparent policies regarding disability services and to widely share and disseminate the information to students and families.

Challenge: **Too often, college faculty do not receive training and support to address the needs of students with disabilities.**

Solution: The RISE Act authorizes \$10 million for the National Center for Information and Technical Support for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities, an existing program within HEA. This Center is charged with supporting disability training for college faculty in addition to providing information to students and families.

Supporting Organizations

National Center for Learning Disabilities, The Advocacy Institute, AHEAD, AIM Institute for Learning and Research, American Association of People with Disabilities, Association of University Centers on Disabilities, Autistic Self Advocacy Network, Center for Learner Equity, Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Council for Exceptional Children, Decoding Dyslexia Network, Education Reform Now, Eye to Eye, Higher Education Consortium for Special Education, Learning Disabilities Association of America, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, National Association of School Psychologists, National Down Syndrome Congress, RespectAbility, Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, TeachPlus and the American Federation of Teachers.